

Appl No 09/864,632
Amdt. dated August 18, 2005
Reply to Office action of May 18, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for storing a parcel sent to a consumer and delivered by a delivery agent, said apparatus comprising:
a storage locker;
a lock coupled to said storage locker and configured to secure said storage locker in a closed state wherein said lock is configured to be opened by only one key at any one time,
a delivery access key adapted to open said lock for access of said storage locker by said delivery agent;
wherein, after said storage locker is opened with said delivery access key, said delivery access key is disabled such that delivery access key does not open said lock and said delivery access key is configured to change to an item access key,
after said storage locker is accessed with said delivery access key, wherein said delivery access key and said item access key are different keys, said item access key being adapted to open said lock and permit access to said storage locker by said consumer, wherein after said storage locker is opened with said item access key said item access key is disabled such that said item access key does not open said lock.
2. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein at least one of said delivery access key and said item access key is synchronized with a key accessible at a location that is remote from said lock.
3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to Claim 2 wherein said lock is configured to allow communication between said remote location and said lock

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4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein:
said lock is a mechanical lock and said delivery access key and said item access key are passwords for accessing a physical key that opens said lock.
5. (Original) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein:
said lock is an electronic lock.
6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to Claim 5 wherein:
at least one of said delivery access key and said item access key is a card key.
7. (Original) The apparatus according to Claim 6 wherein:
said card key is a smart card.
8. (Original) The apparatus according to Claim 6 wherein:
said card key is an integrated circuit card.
9. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein:
said lock is a biometric lock and at least one of said delivery access key and said item access key is a biometric key.
10. (Original) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein:
said storage locker includes environmental controls.
11. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising:
a plurality of said storage lockers.
12. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 11 wherein:
a dimension of each of at least two of said storage lockers is different.
13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 11 wherein:
said delivery access key and said item access key are capable of accessing a plurality of said storage lockers
14. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 11 wherein:
at least two of said plurality of storage lockers are secured by a common lock.

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15. (Canceled)
16. (Currently Amended) A method of delivering a parcel for receipt by a consumer, said method comprising:
receiving from said consumer a selection of a depot for delivery of said parcel;
delivering said parcel to said depot;
unlocking a storage locker with a delivery access key and placing said parcel in said storage locker, wherein said storage locker is located in a said depot selected by said consumer wherein said storage locker is configured to be opened by only one key at any one time;
locking said storage locker; and
disabling said delivery access key such that said delivery access key does not open said storage locker
changing said delivery access key to an item access key adapted to unlock said storage locker; ~~and, wherein said delivery access key and said item access key are different keys, wherein said delivery access key is disabled from opening said storage locker;~~
after said storage locker is opened with said item access key, disabling said item access key such that said item access key does not open said storage locker.
17. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 16 further comprising: synchronizing at least one of said delivery access key and said item access key with another key that is accessible at a location that is remote from said lock.
18. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 16 further comprising: unlocking said storage locker with said item access key.
19. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 16 further comprising: contacting a central system using a delivery management device; and, retrieving at least one of said delivery access key and said item access key from said central system.
20. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 16 further comprising:

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contacting a central system with a delivery management device and logging said placing step.

21. (Original) The method according to Claim 20 wherein:
said logging includes providing a parcel identification and a storage locker identification to said central system.
22. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 21 further comprising:
said central system determining said item access key using said storage locker identification; and
said central system forwarding said item access key and said storage locker identification for receipt by said consumer.
23. (Original) The method according to Claim 21 further comprising:
said central system updating a status of said storage locker.
24. (Original) The method according to Claim 21 further comprising:
said central system providing said consumer with at least said storage locker identification.
25. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 24 further comprising:
said central system providing said consumer with said item access key.
26. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 24 further comprising:
said system verifying that at least one of said parcel identification and said storage locker identification was sent to said consumer.
27. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 24 further comprising:
said system verifying that at least one of said parcel identification and said storage locker identification was received by said consumer.
28. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 16 further comprising:
said storage locker registering with a central system;

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wherein said registration includes providing a status of said storage locker, said status being selected from the group comprising "available", "occupied", "open", "closed", and "stale".

29. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 28 wherein said registration step further comprises:
providing said item access key for said storage locker upon said status changing to "closed".
30. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 28 further comprising:
said storage locker updating said status to "available" subsequent to said storage locker being opened by said consumer with said item access key.
31. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 25 further comprising:
said storage locker updating said status to "stale" subsequent to said storage locker being in said "closed" status for a predetermined period of time.
32. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 31 further comprising:
said storage locker changing said item access key subsequent to said storage locker being locked for said predetermined period of time.
33. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 16 further comprising:
a central system having at least another key synchronized with at least one of said delivery access key and said item access key; and, said central system changing said another key to keep said another key synchronized with said at least one of said delivery access key and said item access key.
34. (Currently Amended) A method for delivering a parcel from a sender to a consumer, said method comprising:
said sender providing receiving said parcel from said sender for delivery by to a delivery agent;
receiving from said consumer a selection of a depot for delivery of said parcel;
communicating said selection to said delivery agent.

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said delivery agent delivering said parcel to said depot;
said delivery agent selecting a storage locker in said depot;
unlocking said storage locker with a delivery access key and placing said parcel into said storage locker;
subsequent to placing said parcel into said storage locker, said delivery agent providing a parcel identification and a storage locker identification to a central system;
said central system changing said delivery access key to an item access key;
said central system causing said consumer to be contacted and provided with said depot selection, said storage locker identification, and said item access key;
said consumer arriving at said depot and using said item access key to retrieve said parcel from said storage locker.

35. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for storing a parcel comprising:

a storage locker; and

an electronic combination lock coupled to said storage locker and configured to secure said storage locker in a closed state, wherein said lock is configured to be opened by only one key at any one time, wherein said lock is configured to unlock when a delivery access key is entered;

wherein after said lock is opened with said delivery access key, said delivery access key is disabled such that said delivery access key does not open said lock and that unlocks said combination lock is configured to change to an item access key upon being used to unlock said lock, said item access key being configured to open said lock; and

wherein said delivery access key and said item access key are different keys and wherein after said storage locker is opened with said item access key said item access key is disabled such that said item access key does not open said lock.

wherein said item access key is synchronized with a key accessible at a location that is remote from said lock.

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- 36 (Original) The apparatus according to Claim 29 wherein said remote location is in communication with said lock via a network.
- 37 (Canceled)
- 38 (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to Claim 35, wherein said delivery access key is disabled after changing to said item access key
- 39 (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 30, further comprising the step of calculating a second delivery access key, said second delivery access key being different from said delivery access key.
- 40 (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 31, further comprising the step of changing said item access key to a second item access key and disabling said item access key, wherein said second item access key is different from said item access key.